

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, and 4-13 are pending in the above-captioned application. Claim 3 has been cancelled. Claims 1, 4, and 7 have been amended. New claim 13 has been added. Claims 1, 8, 9, 10, and 13 are in independent form.

Claims 1-4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over United States Patent 6,969,107 to Omori et al. ("the '107 reference"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Independent claim 1 of the above-captioned application has been amended to claim an inner sheet metal layer presenting a substantially U-shaped structure and a structural reinforcement member including a top member that abuts an outer sheet metal layer and extends thereacross adjacent an open portion of the U-shaped structure. The Examiner contends that a door beam 70, a first dividing member 71, a door lock section 35, and a bracket 36 in the '107 reference disclose the structural reinforcement member in the above-captioned application. However, none of these elements abuts an outer sheet metal layer (an outer layer 13) as required by amended claim 1 in the above-captioned application. As shown in Figure 7 of the '107 reference, only the inner layer 11 abuts the outer layer 13. The door beam 70, the first dividing member 71, the door lock section 35, and the bracket 36 do not abut the outer layer 13. Instead, the door beam 70 is secured to first dividing member 71 and to the bracket 36, the first dividing member 71 is mounted to the inner layer 11, and the door lock section 35, including the bracket 36, is mounted to the inner layer 11. The '107 reference does not, therefore, disclose a structural reinforcement member including a top member that abuts an outer sheet metal layer, as required by amended claim 1 of the above-captioned application.

Claims 2 and 4 depend from claim 1 and, as such, must be construed to incorporate by reference all the limitations of the claim to which it refers, *see* 35 U.S.C. §112, fourth paragraph. Thus, claims 2 and 4 must be read as including the limitation of amended claim 1. For the reasons set forth above, claims 2 and 4 are not anticipated by the '484 reference. Claim 3 of the above-captioned application has been cancelled.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the '107 reference be withdrawn.

Claims 1 and 2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over United States Patent 4,794,735 to Batchelder et al. ("the '735 reference"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Independent claim 1 of the above-captioned application has been amended to claim an inner sheet metal layer presenting a substantially U-shaped structure and a structural reinforcement member including a top member that abuts an outer sheet metal layer and extends thereacross adjacent an open portion of the U-shaped structure. The Examiner contends that an intrusion beam 32 in the '735 reference is a disclosure of the structural reinforcement member in the above-captioned application, and an outer skin 14 is a disclosure of the outer sheet metal layer in the above-captioned application. However, the intrusion beam 32 in the '735 reference does not include a top member that abuts the outer skin 14. The '735 reference does not, therefore, disclose a structural reinforcement member including a top member that abuts an outer sheet metal layer, as required by amended claim 1 of the above-captioned application.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and, as such, must be construed to incorporate by reference all the limitations of the claim to which it refers, *see* 35 U.S.C. §112, fourth paragraph. Thus, claim 2 must be read as including the limitation of amended claim 1. For the reasons set forth above, claim 2 is not anticipated by the '735 reference.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the '735 reference be withdrawn.

Claims 5 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '107 reference. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Each of claims 5 and 6 depends from claim 1 and, as such, must be construed to incorporate by reference all the limitations of the claim to which it refers, *see* 35 U.S.C. §112, fourth paragraph. Thus, each of claims 5 and 6 must be read as including the limitation of amended claim 1. There is no teaching, suggestion, or motivation in the '107 reference for an

inner sheet metal layer presenting a substantially U-shaped structure and a structural reinforcement member including a top member that abuts an outer sheet metal layer and extends thereacross adjacent an open portion of the U-shaped structure.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '107 reference be withdrawn.

Claims 5 and 6 have also been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '735 reference. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Each of claims 5 and 6 depends from claim 1 and, as such, must be construed to incorporate by reference all the limitations of the claim to which it refers, *see* 35 U.S.C. §112, fourth paragraph. Thus, each of claims 5 and 6 must be read as including the limitation of amended claim 1. There is no teaching, suggestion, or motivation in the '735 reference for an inner sheet metal layer presenting a substantially U-shaped structure and a structural reinforcement member including a top member that abuts an outer sheet metal layer and extends thereacross adjacent an open portion of the U-shaped structure.

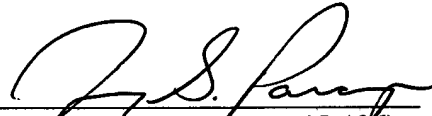
Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '735 reference be withdrawn.

The allowable subject matter set forth in original claim 7 has been rewritten as new claim 13 and includes all of the limitations of the base claim, original claim 1. New claim 13 claims a structural automotive door body including an inner sheet metal layer, the inner sheet metal layer including a latch mounting surface and at least one hinge mounting surface; an outer sheet metal layer; and a structural reinforcement member disposed between the inner and outer sheet metal layers, the structural reinforcement member including top, middle and bottom cross-members and continuous side peripheries, the top member reinforcing the outer panel, the middle cross member extending between the side peripheries to function as a side impact beam, the bottom cross-member abutting and reinforcing the inner and outer sheet metal layers; and wherein the side peripheries include at least one hinge reinforcement and a latch reinforcement. Applicants respectfully submit that new claim 13 should be allowed.

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Amdt dated August 18, 2008
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It is respectfully submitted that this patent application is in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment or the patent application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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